R I C C A R D O N I E L S E N

O U T W A R D B O U N D W I T H C O L U M B U S

Text by

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From a story by

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C H A R A C T E R S

COLUMBUS	Filippo Scelzo
GARCIA	Gino Mavara
JUAN	Angelo Zanobini
A SAILOR	Ernesto Cortese
A BOY	Alberto Marche
A VOICE	Gino Coccimiglio
FIRST SAILOR	Mario Borriello
SECOND SAILOR	Tomaso Soley
THIRD SAILOR	Dino Formichini
A VOICE	Maria Luisa Zeri
A VOICE	Anna Maria Rota

THE TURIN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
of the
Radio Italiana

conducted by

NINO SANZOGNO

produced by

EUGENIO SALUSSOLIA

PART ONE

A VOICE, singing - As the passing hour was good
So will the coming hour be better
And yet it may prove hard
Or worse, if God so wishes.

CHORUS - Blessed be the hour which saw the
Saviour's birth
And Mary who bore him
And John who baptised him
May the Saviour grant us a calm night
May the Saviour grant us a calm voyage
May the Saviour grant us a calm crossing.

A VOICE, singing - By now the horizon hides the Canaries
We are sailing unchartered seas
May God be with us on this voyage.

CHORUS - It is the unchartered sea
The rending, sundering sea
Which for countless days and nights
Rules our destinies at will.

What were we?
Entombed in the galleys
We lived in desolate misery;
In impiety we lived
In hatred and in crime;
we lived in slavery.

Merciful son
Set us free from slavery!
Under your rule of ruthlessness!

What will be our fate!
Can hope be our mate
Or a messenger of death?
What will be our fate?

- What shall we become?
Vagabonds on the sea
Shivered by the hostile winds?

No! Tempest-tossed or becalmed
We shall trust in Cristobal Colon.

Reveal thy secret lands,
O sea of paradise.
Give us the promised gold
sea of mercy.

A VOICE, singing AND CHORUS - The middle of the quiet night
Good night
Be on the watch ahead; may all go well.

COLUMBUS

(his words always supported by the music) - Now I am truly alone,
Only now have I attained what I have so ardently desired for so many years, wandering from place to place, from king to king, from man to man: I have reached the void. Here I stand alone above the Oceanic sea, who knows for how long, I and the world alone, the world composed of earth and sky, and the round sea....

Even my memories are fading... all is far away: the scholars of Salamanca, the mockery which followed me from street to street on night in Cordova... all seems far away. The stars above are shining, waiting for the dawn... Nothing is there but space and stars.. Space and stars. We are sailing across the Oceanic sea. May the words of Isaiah go with us: From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous.

GARCIA
(like an echo, mysteriously) - From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous.

COLUMBUS - A voice? Who art thou? What doest thou here?

GARCIA - I am Garcia Martinez.

COLUMBUS - I do not know thee! How didst thou come on board?
I know each one of my men. Thou wert not among them.

GARCIA - I did not enroll. I hid myself in the hold....

COLUMBUS - Hid in the hold? Why didst not enroll? Who art thou?

GARCIA - I am a sinner. . . I did not enroll because I was in prison. . . I escaped so that I could come with you. (ingratiating) I wanted to be sure of coming with you.

COLUMBUS - Why?

GARCIA - (mysteriously) To take you with me.

COLUMBUS - Take me with thee? Where? What dost thou mean?

GARCIA - Listen well. After all, you slept soundly last night. I saw you.

COLUMBUS - I do not believe thee. I know all that happens on my ship.

GARCIA - (slowly, secretly) I... do not come from the ship. (In a changed voice) I

- am a sinner who did not receive absolution. I believe in God.

COLUMBUS - We must all believe in God.

GARCIA - Do not say "must".

COLUMBUS - Well, what dost thou want of me?

GARCIA - Speak softly, Admiral. What was it you said to King Ferdinand and particularly to Queen Isabella to convince them that they should send you on this expedition? What was it you said to the 106 men on board the caravels to persuade them to risk their lives and sail with you? What was it you said?

COLUMBUS - They all know what I said. Why dost thou ask?

GARCIA - To hear it from your own lips, Cristobal Colon!

COLUMBUS - I said that I had to discover if there were other lands and in these other lands other men did not know the true God and his laws, and convert them.
Now enough! Why hast thou come here? What thou willst of me I know not yet!

GARCIA - Speak softly, Admiral.

VOICE (outside singing) - The watch is called.

COLUMBUS - The changing of the watch!

VOICE (outside singing) - The hour-glass is turning!

COLUMBUS - Silence!

VOICE (singing) - We wish you a good voyage.
If God so wishes.

COLUMBUS - Move not nor make a noise. Wait here for me.
. . . . . .
Where is he? He was here... He has gone.
I will have him looked for: he must be found immediately.
. . . . . .
Or perhaps there was no one in the cabin. . .
Perhaps I was dreaming..

END OF PART ONE

PART TWO

- Months and days have now passed
Eyes watching the hour-glass
Wind and sea accompanying
Months and days have now passed!
Scrutinising north and south
The horizon void and cheerless
Hope today is gloom tomorrow
Scrutinising north and south!

FIRST SAILOR - This morning they caught a live lobster from the "Pinta".

SECOND SAILOR - And tufts of green and yellow grass.

THIRD SAILOR - Seaweed, probably seaweed. . . .

FIRST SAILOR - Grass, I say, grass from the land.

THIRD SAILOR - Grass picked in Salamanca, perhaps. . .

(the sound of the wind and sea is heard continuously until Garcia speaks)

FIRST SAILOR - Ahoy there, something's floating to leeward. . . . Look, over there towards the north-west.

SECOND SAILOR - Something black. . .

THIRD SAILOR - A man overboard, perhaps.

FIRST SAILOR - A tree-trunk. . .

SECOND SAILOR - I think it's a tree-trunk too. . . .

THIRD SAILOR - Bet you ten maravedis it's a man.

FIRST SAILOR - And I fifty that it's a tree-trunk.

(the noises made by the watching men increase)

VOICE - Call the captain! A tree-trunk to larboard.

VOICES - A tree-trunk.

JUAN - Admiral - a tree-trunk. Land ahead!

COLUMBUS - A tree-trunk? Try to get hold of it...

JUAN - Haul, haul!

VOICE - The wind is unfavourable.

VOICE - Throw out another rope!

JUAN - Haul, haul again!

VOICE - Grass, grass floating on the water, coming from the west. . . .

VOICES - Land, land! Cipango! Gold!

COLUMBUS - No, it is not land. . . Be calm. . . We must steer a little to the south-east We must be patient for some days yet... we shall certainly find Cipango where

- the houses have roofs of gold. And if we don't find Cipango we shall go on further... on to where the world stops and the earth starts all over again... Be patient... be calm... The earth will not betray us.

GARCIA - (laughs)

COLUMBUS - Thou again. . . who art thou then?

GARCIA - Land? No, this world, the world of the earth, Cristobal Colon, finishes at the Pillars of Hercules. . . (with a strange gravity) Admiral! That map is wrong. Sailing around the sun to look for land! That map is wrong. Look at it!

COLUMBUS - (after a second's pause) I know it by heart.

GARCIA - On that map are islands which do not exist and the one which exists is not marked. There is no Antilia, Admiral, no San Brandano, but there on the Equator - over there, where Behain has marked Brandano, do you know what ought to be marked?

COLUMBUS - (tolerantly) I am listening.

GARCIA - (calmly, secretly) I must tell you my thoughts.

COLUMBUS - What are they?

GARCIA - (as if mysteriously inspired) There, instead of San Brandano, a little further on, Cristobal Colon, is Purgatory..

- you are looking for Antilia, the Seven Cities or Cipango: and so you keep twenty degrees north of the Equator. But I want to go to Purgatory. You are keeping straight ahead: I, when we approach Purgatory, will throw myself into the sea and swim there, I will get there. . . (in an exhausted voice) unless. . . .

COLUMBUS - (suspiciously) Unless?

GARCIA - Unless you, Cristobal Colon, refuse to leave everyone and come with me.

COLUMBUS - (lightly) Swimming?

GARCIA - (insisting) They tell me that you swam into Lisbon sixteen years ago.

COLUMBUS - (almost gently) I am wondering who thou canst be. . .
How long didst thou remain hidden in the bilge?
The bilge is filled. Thou art surely ill.

GARCIA - I am neither ill nor mad. The real madness is yours, the King's, Isabella's, the blind idiot's who drew that accursed map! Every mark on that map is a deception: on that side, on that side there is nothing, Admiral, nothing more, empty space, nothing. . . NOTHING. . .

COLUMBUS - Not even Antilia?

GARCIA - No.

COLUMBUS - San Brandano, the Seven Cities?

GARCIA - No.

COLUMBUS - But Cipango?

GARCIA - (insisting) Not even Cipango for those who travel straight.

COLUMBUS - (surprised) What does that mean, travelling straight?

GARCIA - (distantly, dreamily, as if staring into an unseen world) Travelling straight means going ahead without thinking of the earth, of what lies on earth, or inside it, of other lands of which we do not know whether they exist or not; and whether they exist or not does not matter and should not matter. . . Then, if none of you sailors, not even one, not one of you thinks about the earth or looks for the earth, then the ship travels straight, you understand? Then you realise that you are circling no longer, and so keeping right on, always straight ahead, towards eternity, you would have become angels, or perhaps the whole ship with its men aboard is a single angel with widespread wings, and arrives at the first skies which are already Paradise.

END OF PART TWO

P A R T T H R E E

(Storm winds, rushing waves, creaking ropes)

FIRST SAILOR - From the north to the south this wind is always against us.

THIRD SAILOR - The devil's behind this wind.

SECOND SAILOR - If we could turn the prow eastwards we'd be back in Salamanca quicker than a heron.

THIRD SAILOR - But this wind is blowing us nowhere.

FIRST SAILOR - We shall never sight land.

THIRD SAILOR - There is no bottom to this deserted sea.

SECOND SAILOR - We shall die of hunger and thirst, and the ships will sail for all eternity on this landless sea.

THIRD SAILOR - And our bodies will moan for all eternity on this restless sea.

VOICE - The compass has veered to the north-west..

VOICE - The needle is no longer pointing to the Pole Star....

VOICE - The compass has veered to the west...

JUAN - Admiral, the three compasses are pointing north-west!

COLUMBUS - What phenomenon is this? What draws them to the west?

(the din outside increases alarmingly)

Be calm! To your stations! Keep to the course, and stay calm!

(the uproar gradually dies down)

JUAN - The compass has returned to normal. Quiet is restored. . . but, Admiral, the men are discouraged!

COLUMBUS - Watch over them, Juan. . . we must keep hope alive. . .

JUAN - Such an incident as this could be very dangerous. . . do you think it could happen again?

COLUMBUS - I know not... I must think about this extraordinary occurrence... first of all I must explain it to myself...Go, Juan do not abandon the crew.

GARCIA - Cristobal Colon, do you know why the compass deviated?

COLUMBUS - It deviated, yes... why?

GARCIA - A submerged continent.

COLUMBUS - Possibly.

GARCIA - And do you know where we are? We have crossed the 35th meridian.

COLUMBUS - That's it, the 35th meridian.

GARCIA - I am approaching my goal.

COLUMBUS - Purgatory, perhaps?

GARCIA - Of course! Again I advise and exhort you, Cristobal Colon. . . So do as I do, as I explained to you the other time. . .

COLUMBUS - So what should I do?

GARCIA - Come with me, to Purgatory.

COLUMBUS - To Purgatory! Swimming!... Of course

(without irony but bemused)

GARCIA - Then you must follow me.

COLUMBUS - I am not alone. I must stay with my men, I am as they are.

GARCIA - You are as your men, it is true. You are the man who in Salamanca even prophesied the earthly Paradise. And what are you all looking for, tell me what?

COLUMBUS - Tell me then.

GARCIA - Gold. You are searching for gold, all of you! Even you, Admiral, the bearer

- of Christ!

COLUMBUS - God be my witness. I explained to the Queen that the gold should be used to liberate the Holy Sepulchre!

GARCI A - The Holy Sepulchre cannot be set free with gold. . .gold comes not from God and cannot lead towards God; it comes from his adversary and returns to him, and all of you with it. . . gold engenders envy and slaughter, naught else!

COLUMBUS - Gold is the commerce of the earth!

GARCI A - (speaking always more slowly and gradually fading)
No! God has taught mankind something greater, more holy and more living than human intercourse. He has taught him Communion. Commerce in gold means commerce in crime. It is blood and betrayal. . . Gold is misery. . . foul misery which drags mankind from prison to prison until some form of death overtakes him.

COLUMBUS - Garcia. . . Garcia, where has thou gone? Garcia. . .

VOICE - The compass is fluctuating again. . .

VOICE - The needle is pointing again to the west. . .

JUAN - Admiral, the compass has fluctuated again!

COLUMBUS - What is happening?

VOICES - The compass has deviated again.
The needle no longer points north.
Disaster!

CHORUS - Blown before
the tempest
At the mercy of
the devil

TWO VOICES
- O hope betrayed
O dream deceived

CHORUS - Let us take over
the command,
Steer to the east
Towards Spain

CHORUS - Let us flee this Godless
sea
Let us flee this landless
sea
Let us flee this dreadful
fate

COLUMBUS - What is it Juan?

JUAN - The compass is
wrong, I tell you.
Admiral, you must
give an explanation.

COLUMBUS - An explanation?
I must think...
wait. . .

JUAN - No, you cannot think
-you must explain
immediately, the
men are threatening:
Come Admiral, the
crew are in revolt.
They frighten me.

COLUMBUS - Afraid? Look over
there, Juan...there
from the middle
hatchway a shadow
is gliding towards
the deck.

JUAN - Towards the deck?
Who? I see nothing..

COLUMBUS - Yes, yes, there he is, over there... He is on the quarter-deck...

JUAN - What? There is nothing on the quarter-deck, Admiral!

COLUMBUS - See, he has thrown himself into the sea.. Garcia... Garcia...!

JUAN - I see nothing! And who is Garcia?

COLUMBUS - Garcia?... He did not come from the ship.

VOICE - A flame is falling from the sky!

COLUMBUS - A heavenly sign!

CHORUS - An omen of disaster
An omen of death

May his blood
Still the wrath of the sea
May his soul for all eternity
Be dispersed in the shadows of the sea
Death to Colon
Death, death to the traitor

(the sound of shooting from the "Pinta")

(gradually the chorus of mutiny melts into the Salve Regina)

VOICES - Land to larboard!
Land to larboard of
the "Santa Maria"

JUAN - Land, Admiral!
The moon lights up a hill
of shining sand, there..
It is land!

Land.. Land.. Land..
We are saved; land ahead!

COLUMBUS
- God be merciful unto me
and let the earth weep
over me!

END OF PART THREE